

SQUAT A CHEEK!

Sneaky gipsy pockets £450K selling council their land back

A GIPSY is set to make £450,000 by selling land she claimed as a squatter back to the council.

Rosie Watson, 69, lives on a plot that was partially bought by her parents in 1990.

She was awarded ownership of the final third of the one-acre piece of

■ by VICTORIA RICHARDS

earth after squatting on it for 12 years – but now wants to sell it back to the taxpayer

And she will not even have to leave because it is set to be converted into a permanent site for travellers.

Mrs Watson can continue living on the land, which is close to the M5 and

A38 in Devon, along with up to 10 other families.

The council will provide electricity, water, toilets and showers.

Champion horse trainer Martin Pipe, who trained the 1994 Grand National winner, has challenged Mrs Watson's claim.

He says he owns part of Maiden Down Common near Culmstock and the sale would be illegal.

But Mrs Watson insisted: "I claimed squatters' rights for part of the woodland because we use it to grow vegetables and for the kids to play in."

Order

"The Land Registry gave us a possessory order, so it is ours to sell."

One local councillor branded the sale a "joke".

Tory Glynor Hughes said: "They've done a nice bit of business – moved on to some common land and then sold it back to us for £450,000."

But Mid Devon Council said there would be "no cost" to the council because the money comes from central Government.

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CASH PLOT:
Fosle and, inset, a For Sale sign at the site
Pictures:
SOUTH WEST NEWS



PRIME SPOT:
The travellers' cabins on the land

TESCO

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